

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1499 without my signature.

This bill would weaken the landscaped freeway provisions in the California Outdoor Advertising Act by establishing a spot exemption for the placement of an advertising display on a portion of a landscaped freeway. California has invested substantial resources in landscaping certain freeway segments and the purpose of the law is to preserve that investment.

Since becoming governor, I have vetoed several bills that proposed to create various special exemptions. In doing so, I have repeatedly expressed a concern that these measures create an unfair playing field for certain advertisers and property owners by allowing an exemption at one location while excluding all others.

While I am greatly concerned about keeping our landscaped freeways untarnished, I am also deeply worried about preserving our economic well being. California needs to continue to adapt to an ever changing economy by utilizing creative new thinking and practices. As such, I am directing the Department of Transportation to develop a comprehensive plan to provide limited relief from landscaping restrictions for economically depressed areas, while still maintaining the protections for our landscaped freeways and a level playing field for businesses.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger